

The American Observer

A free, virtuous and enlightened people must know well the great principles and causes on which their happiness depends. — James Monroe

VOLUME VII, NUMBER 10

WASHINGTON, D. C.

NOVEMBER 8, 1937

American Education Week Celebrated

Progress and Problems Examined This Week by Students and Teachers of Nation

UNITED STATES RANKS HIGH

System Today Provides Great Opportunities for Major Part of Young Americans

Walter E. Myer, editor of THE AMERICAN OBSERVER, is associated this year with the Department of Secondary-School Principals of the National Education Association. As director of that organization's field activities, he is speaking and attending conferences in all parts of the country and has an opportunity to observe significant educational trends. This article considers some of the changes under way in the high schools of the nation.

Of all the things that have happened in America during the last generation, probably nothing is more important than the expansion of attendance in the high schools and colleges. Probably few American students stop very often to consider how important this educational movement has been. They accept their attendance in school as a matter of course. They have air to breathe, water to drink, and schools to attend. They assume that all such benefits come naturally and that they come to all. This is far from the truth. The young people of America are favored as few young people have been in the history of the world. They have greater opportunities to secure the training which would place them in a position to succeed and be happy.

Great Opportunities

Not only do they have greater opportunities than young people in most other parts of the world possess, but they have opportunities unknown to earlier generations of Americans. A small proportion of American youth finished high school 40 or 50 years ago. Today 70 per cent of all the young people of secondary-school age are in attendance. Let us look at this development in another way. Of all the men and women in the United States who are past middle age, a small proportion have attended high school because it was not the custom to attend high schools when they were young. But 20 or 30 years from now, two-thirds of all the people of middle age will have attended high school because these people are now young, and more than two-thirds of them have a chance to go to school during the high school years. If we look at the matter from still another angle, we find that from 1900 to 1930 the average length of the time spent in school was extended by about three years. The average youth of today is going to school three years longer than his father did.

This may mean a great deal to the boys and girls who are now entering adult life. It should give them greater opportunities to enjoy life and to succeed. It should raise their standards of living and their levels of culture. It should also contribute greatly to efficiency in American industry and to the level of American citizenship.

The increasing attendance in our schools has, however, raised certain important problems. Naturally the cost of maintaining schools for an increasing number of the population has grown very greatly. This means higher taxes, and in many communities the taxes are now about as heavy as

(Concluded on page 8)



TWENTY YEARS AFTER IN A FIELD OF FRANCE

In 1917, a raging battleground. In 1937, a still cemetery where lie the bones of American soldiers. (Courtesy American Battle Monuments Commission, and from "The First World War," by Laurence Stallings. Simon and Schuster.)

Rights and Welfare*

It is rather strange that so many people, ordinarily quite practical, should try to settle questions in dispute on the basis of abstract rights. One hears arguments about rights at every turn. An employer may justify his refusal to deal with a labor union on the ground that he has a right to run his own business as he sees fit. A labor organizer may speak of the right of strikers to keep strikebreakers from taking their jobs. Conservatives generally talk of the rights of property owners, and liberals talk of the right to high living standards. The trouble with all these contentions about rights is that they seldom get one anywhere. It is hard to prove the existence of an abstract right. To determine that a thing is right or just, one must have some standard of measuring justice, and there is frequently disagreement concerning these measuring rods.

Nine times out of ten both truth and justice will be served if the parties to a dispute drop all reference to rights and if, instead, they talk about consequences. In the case of the employer who talks of his right to run his business as he sees fit, for example, it would be better to settle the argument in this way: Inquire whether the practice which the employer wants to follow would, if followed, serve the public interests. In case of the dispute over recognizing a labor union and giving it certain powers over the conduct of a business, the proper question is: "Would people in general be better off if the employer had his way, managed the business as he saw fit, and gave labor no powers over it?" "Would such a policy conduce to the general good?" If such a policy on the part of the employer promotes the general welfare, it is a good policy. If it does not serve the common good, it is not a good policy, and the employer has no right to adopt it. For no one has a right to do a thing which is contrary to the public good. He may have a legal right, but only in case the law has not kept abreast of justice. A man may have a legal right to avoid payment of taxes if he can find a loophole in the law. But rights in the broader sense are based on the common good or the general welfare and on that alone.

If this principle is recognized, people will not talk so much about rights at the outset of an argument. They will discuss first the probable consequences of the acts or policies which are the subjects of the debate. They will then inquire whether these consequences would leave people generally worse or better off. After they have threshed out these probabilities, but not before, they will be ready to argue about rights. Ultimately we must decide all questions on the basis of right and wrong, but we can determine what is right or wrong, not by abstract theorizing, but by measuring consequences in terms of the common good.

* Reprinted by request from a summer issue of THE AMERICAN OBSERVER.

Armistice Day and The Future of Peace

As Nation Recalls Close of World War, Thoughts Turn to Prevention of New Conflict

FOREIGN POLICY EXAMINED

United States Faces Alternative Lines of Action as World Moves Toward War

During the years that have passed since the close of the World War, it has been the custom of the American people to celebrate Armistice Day. On the 11th of each November they pause a moment to give thanks for the peace which came on November 11, 1918, and to consider means whereby our country may be kept from war in the future.

It is natural, when we look back to the closing of the World War, that we should try to understand what that war means in the history of our nation. What did we accomplish by helping to win the war? What lessons may be learned from our war experience? It is by giving careful thought to questions of that kind that we can best pay our tribute to the memory of the boys who fought and died that America might win in that great struggle.

War Dangers

As we come to another Armistice Day, America is still at peace. So are the great nations of Europe. But talk of war is in the air. Japan is waging a bloody war of conquest against China. Spain is wearing away in civil conflict, and several neighboring nations are taking sides, threatening to engulf all Europe. Germany, armed to the teeth, looks hungrily to the eastward; to the lands of Czechoslovakia and Russia. Italy, flushed with recent successful conquest in Africa and heavily armed, has armies in Spain; seeks further conquests and makes common cause with Germany. The French and the British talk of checking the expansion of the fascist dictatorial nations, but do little or nothing. The President of the United States says that America has an active interest in the things that are happening across the seas, that another war would surely affect us deeply and that we will oppose aggression and aggressor nations, but he does not say how we will do it.

It seems, therefore, that the world is, in many respects, back in the position it was in before the World War. America is in a position similar to that which confronted her before her entrance into the World War. The nation may before long be faced by a decision like that which confronted it in 1917. This period of Armistice Day celebration is an appropriate time, therefore, to inquire about the results of our going into the war, so that we may make future decisions in the light of our past experience. We decided in 1917 to enter the World War. We decided to throw our weight into the scale to curb and check aggressor nations. If a similar situation should develop again, as it well may, should we act again as we did before? Looking back across the 19 years that have passed since the end of the war, can we say that our decision was justified, that we acted wisely and should act in the same way again if called upon to decide under like circumstances?

The people of the United States naturally believed in 1917 that they were making a



DARLING IN DES MOINES REGISTER

1915

The nation's mood in 1915 was to keep out of the war which had turned Europe into a battlefield.



FROM A DRAWING IN LIFE

1918

But before three years had passed, American soldiers were in foreign trenches, and "Hang the Kaiser" was the cry.



HARDING IN BROOKLYN EAGLE

1920

After the war we were weary of Europe, and under the leadership of the Republican party we returned to "normalcy."

wise decision when they decided to go into the war. Twenty years later, in the spring of 1937, the Institute of Public Opinion conducted a poll of thousands of Americans in all parts of the country and asked whether the United States had made a mistake in going into the war. About two-thirds of all the people who were asked said that our entering the war was a mistake. Were the majority right when they entered the war to check aggression, or were the majority of the people right 20 years later when they said that this policy was wrong?

A Wrong Decision?

It is very hard to answer that question, and yet we must attempt to answer it if we are to decide wisely upon our future actions. It is easy to see how many people, looking back over the last 20 years, should become discouraged and should say that the war, so far as they were concerned, was a failure. A strong argument to that effect can indeed be developed. It is certain that, even though we won the war, we failed to achieve most of the announced objectives.

When we entered the war, it was commonly declared that we did so in order to

end wars. The belief prevailed that if the Germans, aggressive and militaristic as they were, should be soundly defeated, the world might thereafter live at peace. The Germans were defeated, but now, 19 years after the close of the war, we know that the period of wars did not end with that defeat. Most of the people believe that the world will again be engulfed in war. Certainly such a thing is a distinct possibility. Seldom in human history have disastrous wars seemed so imminent as they do today.

We said also, 20 years ago, that we were fighting to make the world safe for democracy. We won the war, and yet the world is not safe for democracy. Germany and Italy, though never democratic in spirit and practice, are less so today than they were before the World War. Russia has thrown off one form of autocratic government only to adopt another form of autocracy. The forces of democracy have made no headway in Japan. Most of the small nations of Europe are undemocratic. Great Britain, France, and the United States remain democracies, but fascism is a threat in France today, and to a lesser extent it is a threat in Great Britain.

Another of our purposes in going into the war was to defend the rights of neutral nations to sell their goods to belligerent nations in time of war, but that right is no safer today than it was 20 or 25 years ago. Everyone believes that if another great war should break out, the same kind of disputes over the rights of neutrals would arise again.

One Objective Gained

In the light of all these facts, it is not surprising that many people should call our participation in the World War a failure, and that they should argue that we should not take part in another war to curb militarists, to protect the victims of aggression, to make the world safe for democracy, or to defend the rights of neutral commerce.

There is one objective of our participation in the World War, however, which was achieved. We did keep Germany from winning the war; at least our participation played a great part—probably a decisive part—in preventing German victory. Was that achievement worth all that we put into the war—all the money, all the lives, all the disarrangements of our industries which resulted? Here again it is hard to say. What would the results of German victory have been? If the French and the British had been beaten to their knees—if they had been rendered helpless—would the Germans, flushed with victory, have become increasingly aggressive and militaristic? Would they have expanded in Europe and perhaps South America until they would have been a great irritation and even a threat to the United States? Would we sooner or later have been provoked into war with them, and would we have been obliged to fight that war under less advantageous circumstances than we fought the war 20 years ago? Would there have been less likelihood of our success?

Difficult as that question is, one must undertake to answer it before he can be certain whether our participation in the World War was a failure. It is particularly important that each citizen try to answer the question, for it will help him perhaps to make up his mind later when a similar question may come up. If the British and French and Russians are fighting the Germans after awhile, we may have to decide again whether in the long run it would be better for us to help to prevent a German victory, or to stand off and let the European nations fight it out, whatever the results might be.

Postwar Policies

Here is a question of another kind which we should undertake to answer. Would it have been possible for the United States and the other victor nations to have used their victories more wisely than they did following the Armistice and peace of 19 years ago? If they had been wise and considerate and tolerant and generous after they defeated Germany, might

they have built the kind of permanent peace for which the world was hoping and praying? Might they have established a world order in which the democracies would have been safe? Might they, in short, have achieved the larger purposes for which they were fighting and for which America entered into the conflict?

We know that they sought to impose a very harsh peace on Germany, one that deeply embittered the Germans; they sought to make the Germans pay more in reparations than those people possibly could pay; they took the German colonies away; they forced the Germans to agree not to arm again, when they themselves remained heavily armed; they did many other things which made the German people resentful and angry. If the Germans had not been made to suffer these outrages, perhaps they would never have turned against the democratic government which they established after the war and would not have placed Hitler and his militaristic Nazis in power.

And might America have contributed a great deal to peace and good will in the world if, after having fought side by side with the democratic nations during the war, she had remained by their side after the war was over, taking part in the diplomatic discussions of the world and helping decide the big problems of war and peace with which the nations have wrestled since the close of the World War? Instead of that, our people said, as soon as the war was over, that they would stand aside and be isolated; that they would not take part actively in international conferences and in the making of international decisions. They gave the world to understand that they would not agree in advance to help check aggression if it should appear again in the world.

A Vital Decision

Whether the United States should adopt a policy of fighting against the aggressors when a great war breaks out is a highly debatable question. It is a question which the Americans should decide in advance, insofar as it is possible for them to do so. But one thing seems fairly clear: if our country is so closely tied to the rest of the world in interest that it must go to war to check aggression when a great militaristic act of aggression occurs, it would seem that during the years of peace we should work with the other nations to see to it that conditions leading to war shall not develop. If our influence is to be used against aggressors after wars start, it should be used consistently and continuously against aggressor diplomacy when there is still peace in the world and still hope of arranging things so that the aggressors will not dare to set their armies on the march. In other words, the American people should make up their minds whether or not they are so closely knit to the rest of the world that they cannot remain isolated. Then, having made up their minds, they should act consistently, working through the years of peace and war for the great objective they have adopted.

Perhaps, when the American people think things over, however, they will decide that this country should not take part in wars among the foreign nations, even though some of the nations are more undemocratic than the others and more aggressive. During the years since the World War, the majority of the American people seem to have felt that our nation need not become involved in the quarrels of other nations. This feeling has been so strong that our government has refused to participate in the League of Nations and has had little to do with the diplomatic arguments which have gone on among the nations. In most cases, our government has not participated in the international conferences. It has been our official position that Germany, Italy, France, Great Britain, and the other nations should work out their problems as best they might without our taking part in the decisions. We have adopted this policy in the belief that the course of affairs in Europe and Asia is of no vital concern to America and that in case unwise decisions are made and in case these decisions lead to war, we may stay out of the war.

If we have been right during all these years, then our proper course, now that war clouds are becoming more threatening, is to hold aloof and not become embroiled in the disputes. It would be a very bad thing for us to get in the habit of taking no part in the settling of international troubles during times of peace, only to jump into the conflict whenever the diplomatic arrangements were of such a nature as to lead the nations into war.

These are vital national problems which we have been considering. It is important that as a nation we take the wisest possible course in dealing with foreign nations in times of peace and in times of war. It is highly appropriate, then, that such problems be given attention during Armistice Week—the week when we study the lessons of the past in order to determine how we should act in the future.

There is no better time than this week of Armistice celebration for straight and honest thinking about the vital interest of America and the part she should play in world affairs. If thinking is done, there will be a better chance that our country will act consistently in the defense of its interest through periods of peace and war. That is why Armistice Day is a time for reflections.



KIRBY IN N. Y. WORLD-TELEGRAM

1933

During the twenties and early thirties Uncle Sam kept saying, "No More European Wars for Me."



CARLISLE IN YOUNGSTOWN DAILY VINDICATOR

1936

However, as wars and rumors of wars increased, we began to experience new doubts and fears. "Can we avoid it?" became the question.



HERBLOCK IN WASHINGTON NEWS

1937

And today we wonder what policy we should follow, and how we can best defend our interests.

AROUND THE WORLD

Russia: On the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Communist revolution, celebrated on November 7 with elaborate ceremonies that will extend for several weeks, Josef Stalin, the Russian dictator, made an address to which considerable importance is being attached.

Stalin, who had made no public utterance for eight months, spoke before a group of leading politicians connected with the Soviet steel, coal, and chemical industries. Taking note of the reported lag in industrial production, allegedly caused by "spies, wreckers, saboteurs, and hyphenated scoundrels," the dictator appealed for more widespread confidence between the Soviet leaders and the masses. "We have tens of thousands of medium and little leaders," he declared. "They are modest people who do not push themselves forward and are hardly noticeable . . . on them depends the fate of our economic management. . . . Leaders come and go but the people remain."

The entire speech, along this same trend of thought, is taken in certain quarters to throw considerable light on the recent purge. According to this comment, those executed in the last 18 months were guilty, in Stalin's eyes, of turning Russia away from the direction of a classless society. The victims, according to this same view, sought to reestablish a small but powerful oligarchy which it was the task of the revolution to abolish. Still following this interpretation, Stalin regards himself as a kind of people's tribune, ruthless in his methods, but determined to protect the masses against the encroachments of a grasping bureaucracy.



JOSEF STALIN

Balearic Islands: World interest in the Spanish civil war has shifted both from the still fruitless efforts of the Nonintervention Committee to effect the withdrawal of volunteers and from the internal military situation to the measures taken by England and France to prevent Italy from gaining control of the Balearic Islands. With a total area of less than 2,000 square miles and a population of 350,000, these islands, which belong to Spain, are in themselves of but little importance. But their strategic position in the eastern Mediterranean earns them a more than passing thought in the deliberations of the major powers.

The Balearics lie squarely among the trade lanes between France and her colonial empire. They lie only a little more distant from the sea route along which British vessels sail to and from the British possessions in Africa, Asia, and Australasia. Obviously, if a major power with adequate naval strength were to occupy these islands or turn them into strong naval bases, it could offer a serious threat to these trade routes.

These considerations were perhaps in Mussolini's mind when, at the outbreak of the civil war, he made the support he was giving to the rebels a pretext for occupying Majorca, the largest of the islands. According to reports from a reliable source, the Italian dictator has stationed a large number of naval and aviation officers in Majorca, as well as at Ibiza and Formentera, two other islands in the group, which he subsequently occupied.

When the British and French governments protested this seizure, Mussolini offered assurances that he had no intention of retaining possession of the Balearics. But these assurances have apparently satisfied neither Paris nor London. Recalling the rumor that Premier Primo de Rivera,

Spain's former dictator, had once promised Mussolini these islands as a naval base, the two capitals fear lest a similar deal has been made by Rome with General Franco. Hence, London has dispatched its most powerful warship to patrol the waters surrounding these islands, and France has followed suit.

By these actions, the Balearics become again the center of a struggle for power in the Mediterranean. From ancient times, when Carthage seized the Balearics as a countermove to Roman expansion in Africa, they have figured in every Mediterranean struggle, including the Vandal advance against the tottering Roman Empire, the Islamic advance against the Christian rulers of Europe, and, finally, in the long wars between Europe and England over which of two dynasties should rule Spain.

* * *

Haiti: In the Caribbean Sea, isolated from the madding world, is the Republic of Haiti where, according to an observer, the 2,500,000 Negro inhabitants "are building a country of law and order, of stable government and sure, happy living." Descendants of the former slaves, the Negroes are for the most part farmers, producing, on extensively irrigated soil, large crops of sugar, cotton, and cocoa, as well as a grade of coffee noted for its excellence.

Commerce in Haiti is controlled by the women. It is they who lug the farm products to the village markets where they engage in long and animated barter. This custom is a relic of the days when Haiti was a French colony and the men feared to appear in the village lest they be impressed into the army by the French officials.

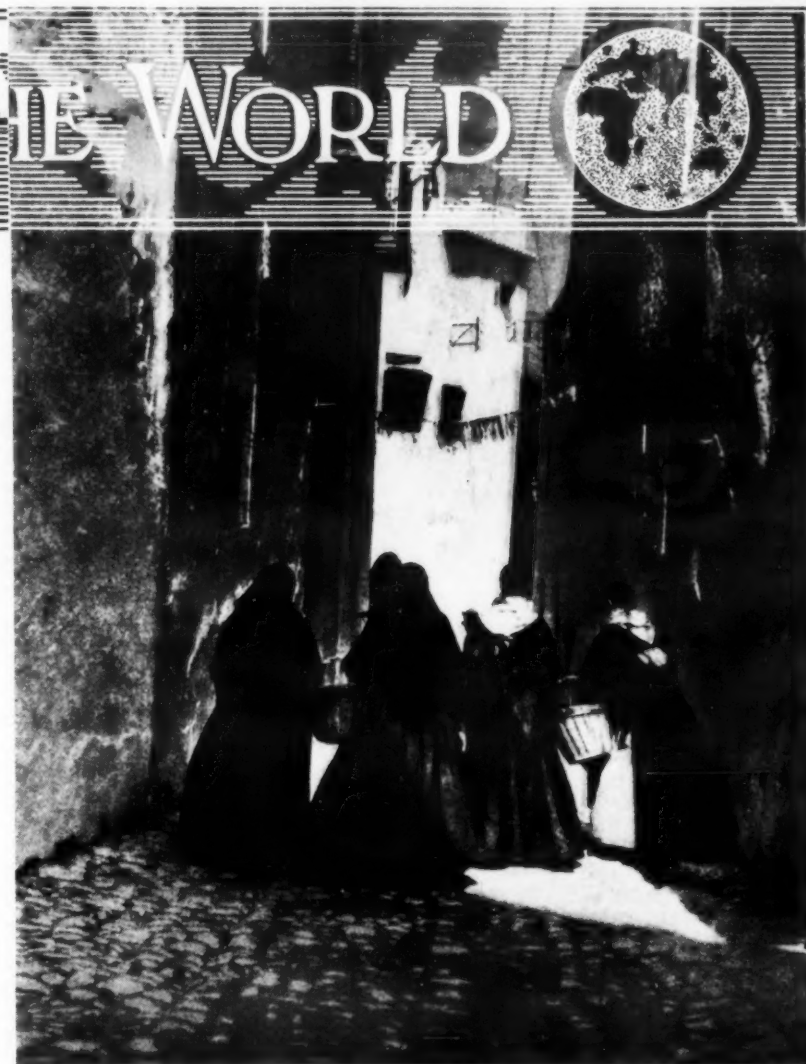
Although it is over a century since the French left Haiti, reminders of their occupation are everywhere evident. Rugged peaks abound in mansion ruins and the crumbled citadels where colonial troops were once stationed. Perhaps the most characteristic sight in the island is that of a gateway, seemingly leading to nowhere, standing alone in the midst of thick foliage. There are over 300 such gateways that once opened upon the plantations of the French aristocracy.

* * *

Mongoukuo: While the Nine Power Conference assembled last week in Brussels, Belgium, the prospect of its bringing



WIDE WORLD
IL DUCE RIDES HIS NEW WHITE HORSE
Mussolini, mounted on the Arabian horse sent to him as a present from the king of Yemen.



A NARROW STREET IN IBIZA, THE BALEARIC ISLANDS
(From a photograph by Pierre Boucher in "Camera Around the World," McBride.)

an early end to the Far Eastern war made none too bright by the refusal of Japan to participate in the parley, Tokyo moved to carve a new empire out of territory that its armies have conquered in North China. As with Manchuria in 1932, the Japanese government did not overtly pretend to attach the subdued area to itself. Rather, it connived with local political chieftains, hostile to the Nanking regime of Chiang Kai-shek, in the creation of an autonomous political council. The territory thus "made independent from China" includes the province of Suiyuan and that part of Chahar not previously under Japanese control.

Mongoukuo offers the Japanese little else than a belt of grazing land, where nomadic clans wander with their flocks. But since it is part of that region vaguely included in the term "Inner Mongolia," it will be of strategic importance as a buffer state against Outer Mongolia, the people's republic of the east, which has a military alliance with Soviet Russia.

With the conviction growing in informed quarters that a war between Japan and Russia is inevitable—such an opinion was expressed only a few days ago by a high Japanese officer—the advantages to Japan in her occupation of Mongoukuo are evident.

* * *

Guatemala: The small Central American republic of Guatemala has found a unique way of eliminating speed on her highways. Since much of the country is mountainous, the speed limit has been placed at 15 miles an hour, to guard drivers against their own folly. When an automobile leaves a city, the traffic officer in charge jots down the number of the car, the time of leaving, and the destination. While the car continues on its way, the officer telephones ahead to the next village where another officer watches to see that the car does not arrive sooner than would have been possible within the legal speed limit. Should the driver come too early, he is arrested and given an opportunity in a not too comfortable cell to repent of his haste.

Of course, the police in Guatemala can use this system because automobile traffic is extremely thin. The land is, as a matter

of fact, but little developed along modern lines. Until 1931, there were no roads at all in Guatemala, save for the rough paths made by the ox-drawn carts of Indian traders. Since then, however, considerable progress has been made in road building, as the result of the fondness for modern ways entertained by President Jorge Ubico.

* * *

Relations between France and Italy have become somewhat strained as the result of the Italian government's action in withdrawing its ambassador from Paris. Rome claims that it took this action because Paris has not had an ambassador there for more than a year. Paris, on the other hand, claims that it has appointed a representative, but that the Italian government is unwilling to receive him unless he is accredited not only to the king of Italy but also to the emperor of Ethiopia. France will not thus accredit its ambassador because it would amount to a recognition of the Italian conquest of Ethiopia.

* * *

Substantiating suspicions that had been widely aired in France, former Premier André Tardieu has revealed that while in office he secretly gave funds, from a government source, to Colonel Francois de la Rocque, leader of the fascist Cross of Fire organization. The revelation has assumed the proportions of a scandal in France.

The American Observer

A Weekly Review of Social Thought and Action

Published weekly throughout the year (except two issues in December and the last two issues in August) by the CIVIC EDUCATION SERVICE, 744 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C.

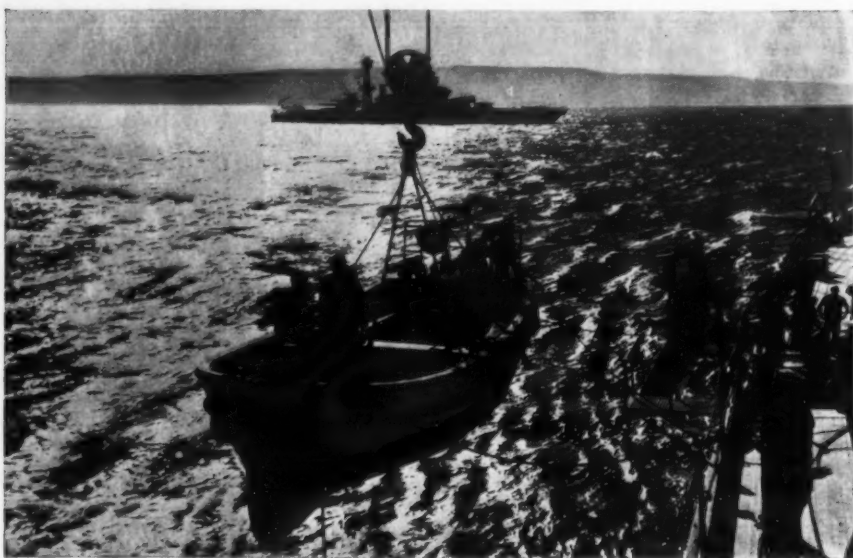
Subscription price, single copy, \$2 a calendar year. In clubs of five or more for class use, \$1 a school year or 50 cents a semester. For a term shorter than a semester the price is 3 cents a week.

Entered as second-class matter Sept. 15, 1931, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

After night battle practice on the U. S. S. Virginia, the ship's boats are hoisted back on board. Another battleship, which also participated in the practice, stands by at a distance.

Institute of Propaganda

We are frequently told to be on guard against propaganda. We are advised to be independent in our thinking and not to let anyone else, any individual or any organization, color, or creed, change our opinions by telling us just what they want us to know while withholding from us things which might lead us to other conclusions.

But how are we to tell when we pick up our newspapers or listen to a radio program or attend the movies whether the facts spread before us are what they seem to be? How are we to tell whether or not we are being influenced by self-seeking persons? We want to be on our guard, it is true; but we gain little merely by being suspicious and skeptical of everything we hear or see.

It is because of this difficulty that we have such great need for some reliable and disinterested organization which will teach us how to detect propaganda so that we may effectively shun it. An organization of that kind has recently been established. It is the Institute for Propaganda Analysis, 132 Morning-side Drive, New York City. Professor Clyde R. Miller of Columbia University was chiefly responsible for the establishment of this organization, and he has the support of a number of prominent educators. These men send out a monthly letter to subscribers at a cost



AND DON'T FORGET—IT'S A RUSH ORDER!

TALBURT IN WASHINGTON NEWS

of \$2 a year. The monthly letter calls attention to instances of propaganda which it describes and analyzes.

In its second letter, the Institute describes some of the devices which are used to influence the public. One of them is the "name-calling" device. Propagandists will attach some name to anyone they wish to discredit, such as "fascist, dictator, Red, alien, economic royalist, Constitution wrecker," because the public is suspicious of anyone to whom those names are applied, whether or not they are deserved.

Another device is that of "glittering generalities." Here the propagandist uses terms which the public likes. A politician, for instance, might say that he stands for "truth,

freedom, honor, liberty, and social justice." No one knows exactly what he means, but it all sounds very fine.

The Institute points out that propagandists always play on our emotions. They very seldom try to make us think; in fact, they would rather have us not think. They "make us glow with pride or burn with hatred," without really understanding why we do so.

The Stock Market

In last week's article on the stock market, we discussed government regulation of "buying on margin" which required the purchaser to put up 55 per cent of the cash value of the stock. Many men on the stock exchange blamed this rule for the recent slump in stock prices; they said that such a rule made it too hard for customers to buy stocks, and consequently prices had dropped. A few days ago, the Federal Reserve Board reduced the margin requirement to 40 per cent. Now if a person wishes to buy \$10,000 worth of stock, he needs only \$4,000; a week ago, he had to have \$5,500. By this means the government hopes to make it easier for customers to purchase stocks, and so bolster up the prices.

Loans on Corn

The government is now planning to make loans to farmers on their corn crops, similar to the loans which are being made on cotton. A bumper crop of corn has made the price shaky, and it is feared that if the surplus is turned on the market, the price will drop sharply. If the farmers receive loans from the government, they can hold their corn until there is a better demand for it. Secretary of Agriculture Wallace estimates that the loans should amount to 46 cents a bushel on 300 million bushels of corn. The problem that faces the agricultural experts now is to find the money to finance the loans. President Roosevelt has said that the budget cannot be thrown out of balance any further by loading it with new expenditures; which means that more money will have to be taken in by the government if the loans are to be made.

The United States is experienced in making loans on corn. In 1933 it invested 120 million dollars in 265 million bushels of corn. The following year, corn prices rose sharply, and the corn was sold for enough to repay the loans. In 1935 the government invested only 11 million dollars in loans, and was repaid when prices went up. Last year, when drought cut the crop to one and one-half billion bushels, the government had to go to the farmers' rescue. This year, because the crop totaled two and one-half billion bushels, the corn farmers again need help.

Labor Parley

The conference between the American Federation of Labor and the Committee for Industrial Organization came to a deadlock, after three days of discussion, on the same point which originally split the two organizations apart. The C. I. O. wants to continue

organizing workers according to industries; the A. F. of L. refuses to issue any industrial union charters, preferring to organize workers according to crafts.

The conference met again last Thursday, but with little hope of either side giving in enough to reach a compromise. The only thing which was holding the conference together was the desire of the workers themselves and the general public for some agreement between the organizations which would put a stop to the bitter rivalry. Letters and telegrams poured into Washington from the representatives of both the C. I. O. and the A. F. of L., urging them to arrange a peace plan.

Exit the RFC

Not long ago the President abolished the Resettlement Administration; later he did away with the National Emergency Council. Then he told the PWA to finish up its work as rapidly as possible, and to start no more projects. Now he has taken a step which seems to be leading to the end of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. He has told the RFC to make no more loans, even from funds which have already been appropriated for it.

The RFC is not one of President Roosevelt's creations; it came into being in 1932 under President Hoover. Its function was to lend money to industries which needed financial help in order to keep them from

HARRIS AND EWING
LABOR LEADERS CONFER

As the A. F. of L.-C. I. O. conference opened in Washington. Left to right: Sidney Hillman (C. I. O.), George Harrison (A. F. of L.), and Phillip Murray (C. I. O.). After several days of discussion the meeting was adjourned for a week with the delegates in complete disagreement.

bankruptcy. However, most of its loans have been made since President Roosevelt took office.

Miss Roche Resigns

The government lost one of its most able officials when Miss Josephine Roche, assistant secretary of the treasury, resigned recently. Miss Roche has been in charge of the treasury's public health work since 1934. She came to Washington from Colorado, where she was president of a coal mining company, and resigned in order that she might go back to Denver to take charge of the company again. Both the President and Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau expressed their regret at losing Miss Roche; her position will be held open for her if she finds it possible to return, they said.

Social Security

Since February 1936, the federal government has paid out 214 million dollars in grants to states to care for the aged, the blind, and dependent children, according to Social Security Board figures. Approximately two million persons have been aided, about two-thirds of them too old to support themselves. These aged people receive on the average \$18 a month; the blind receive \$24, and families with dependent children, \$30.

The work of the Social Security Board is just getting under way, however. All the states, as well as Hawaii, Alaska, and the District of Columbia, have set up unemployment insurance systems which the Board has

approved. Most of them will not start making payments until 1938; Wisconsin is the only state whose unemployment compensation system is already in actual effect. The federal government has contributed 15 million dollars to put the various state systems in operation.

Thirty-four million persons are registered



USING COTTON

Experiments are proving that the use of cotton fabric is

with the Social Security Board for old-age pensions. Four million have applied for benefits from the old-age pension plan since July 1.

"The River"

Those who saw the picture, "The Plow That Broke the Plains," will be eager to see another government film, "The River," which is rated as highly as the first. "The River" shows the effects of floods, deforestation, and soil erosion on the two-thirds of the United States which is drained by the Mississippi and its tributaries. Although the theme of the film is one which has been stressed a great deal lately, "The River" presents it more graphically than any writer or speaker could hope to do.

Pare Lorentz, who was in charge of the first picture, also wrote and directed "The River." Cameramen worked for more than a year to "shoot" the scenes, which include several taken during the floods of last winter. Special music and explanatory narration accompany the pictures and add to its effect. The film has had several previews in southern cities; it will have a formal premiere in Washington soon, and will then be released to the nation. It was prepared by the Farm Security Administration.

Roads of Cotton

In the future automobiles may ride on cotton. The U. S. Bureau of Public Roads is ex-



A NEW LINER

Drawing of the new ship which will be constructed for the "finest and safest" ship

the United States

Doing, Saying, and Thinking

couraging states to experiment with cotton-built roads, and tests made so far have been highly successful.

Cotton highways are constructed by first putting down a layer of sand and clay. On top of that is placed a coat of tar, and this is covered with a piece of cotton fabric. Then over the whole a layer of hot asphalt and



U. S. BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS
BUILD A ROADWAY
Cotton fabric construction helps to make better and more durable tar and asphalt roads.

crushed rock is pressed down very solidly.

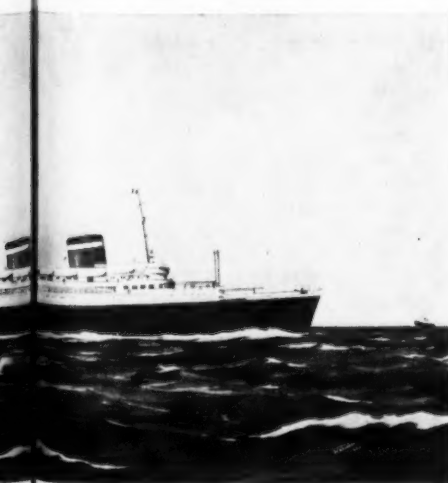
The cotton serves to make the road more cushionlike. It holds the surface together and reduces the amount of repair work needed. Short stretches of cotton road have been built in South Carolina and have gone two years without requiring any repair. The average upkeep cost of a tar and asphalt road is \$200 a year per mile.

The longest piece of cotton road was opened a few days ago between the towns of Clinton and Faison, North Carolina. It is eight miles long, and if successful, the use of cotton in road building will greatly increase.

Commemorative Coins

During the first nine months of 1937, the United States treasury issued 11 special coins, commemorating various events and individuals. These commemorative coins have become very popular lately, so popular, in fact, that 50 bills were introduced at the last session of Congress asking for special issues. Only two of the bills passed, and it is doubtful if many more are enacted, since the treasury regards the coins as a nuisance. President Roosevelt has expressed his opposition to them, and the House Coinage Committee says it will recommend no more such bills.

The coins issued this year were for the Arkansas Centennial, Daniel Boone, Roanoke Island, Texas Centennial, Oregon Trail, Cleveland Centennial, Landing of the Swedes in Delaware, Battle of Gettysburg, New Ro-



WIDE WORLD
UNITED STATES
The Leviathan Lines, to replace the Leviathan. It will be the ship and will cost \$15,750,000.

chelle, New York, Battle of Antietam, and Norfolk.

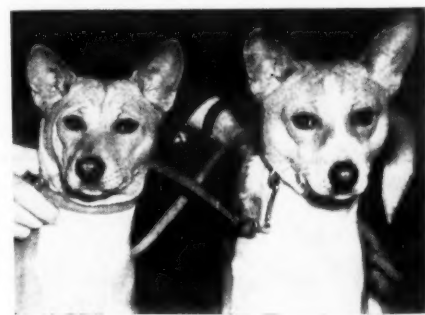
Exporting Films

American picture producers depend on foreign countries for almost 40 per cent of their yearly revenue. However, they are finding it increasingly difficult to sell their pictures in foreign countries, because of restrictions which encourage home production. For instance, Italy has a law which requires theaters to show one Italian picture for every two American pictures. There is also a strict censorship on all American films, and many of them are banned. More than that, there are various fees and taxes which make American films very expensive, so moving picture proprietors use Italian pictures as much as possible.

Germany, France, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Austria all have similar laws which favor films made at home over American products. England is about the only foreign nation which does not have a strict regulation of imported films. That is one reason half the American films shipped abroad are shown in England.

A Town Revived

New Salem, Illinois, where Abraham Lincoln lived for a number of years, is being restored just as it was a hundred years ago. Young Lincoln came to New Salem when he was 21. He found a village of only 100 citi-



INTERNATIONAL
BARKLESS WONDERS

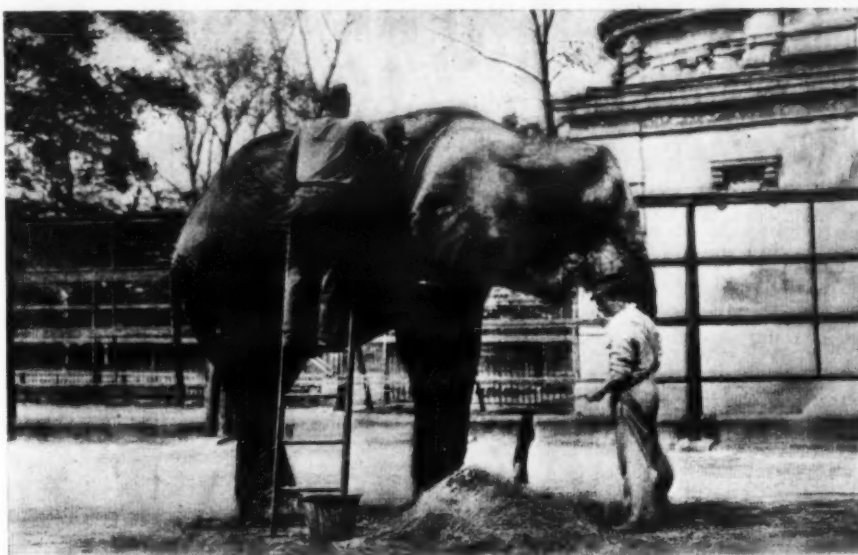
The bites of these dogs are worse than their barks, for they never bark. The best they can do is a low growl. They were recently imported into the United States from the Belgian Congo, and an attempt will be made to raise them as apartment-house pets.

zens, but its gristmill, sawmill, carding mill, blacksmith and cooper shops made it a trading point for the pioneers in that territory. Lincoln moved away in 1837. Probably that had nothing to do with it, but gradually New Salem lost its importance and before long it had disappeared entirely.

A few years ago the state of Illinois included the village site in the New Salem State Park. As a shrine to Abraham Lincoln, the state set to work to rebuild the little village as it was when he lived there. When the CCC came into existence, a camp was located in the park, and the CCC boys helped with the work. A number of the cabins and the old Rutledge Tavern have already been completed, and work is progressing on the mills and shops. Once they are completed, the early industries will be set in operation to give visitors a picture of life in those days. The gardens will grow the vegetables which were especially popular then. Already the park is attracting an average of 1,500 people a day.

FDR on a Stamp

The United States will not print stamps which have a living person's picture on them. This practice was forbidden in order to prevent politicians from getting free advertising by putting their pictures on stamps which would be seen by millions of voters. But that does not prevent foreign countries from honoring a living American by putting his picture on a stamp. Guatemala has announced that President Roosevelt's picture will appear on one of the four new stamps which it will issue to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the United States Constitution.



OIL FOR THE BACK OF AN ELEPHANT
Zoo keepers soak an elephant's hide with oil. (From an illustration in "Wild Animal World," by Raymond L. Ditmars.)

NEW BOOKS

NOW that the civil war in Spain has advanced well into its second year, there are frequent intervals when volunteer soldiers from other nations are leaving the front, injured and disabled, to return home, bringing first-hand reports of how the dispute stands between the Loyalists and the Insurgents. Members of the International Brigade, these volunteers went from the United States, England, France, Russia, and other countries to join the Loyalists in fighting what they believed to be the world's greatest struggle for civilization and the maintenance of democratic government.

Among these accounts by the returning soldiers is "Volunteer in Spain," by John Sommerfield (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Publisher. \$1.50). An Englishman, Mr. Sommerfield fought many months on the Loyalist side, and having been right in the thick of the struggle, he is able to give an accurate picture of what has been going on. He states quite truthfully that "I have tried to write of the ordinary routine of our war rather than of heroism." This, better than any other description, characterizes the book. Misery, hard work, bloodshed, death, and still more fighting—these are the things of which he writes.

Yet the book is all the more remarkable, because Mr. Sommerfield is thus grim without being repulsive, nor does he brag about the courage which inevitably marks the men who fought through those experiences. After he has concluded the horrible war pictures, he very briefly tells why he and others deliberately placed themselves in the face of death, although many times previously they had marched in the parades against war. It is therefore a worthwhile book for anyone who wants a better picture of the Spanish situation than he has yet been able to obtain from the accounts by foreign correspondents.

EVEN though few people ever have the opportunity to travel in expeditions to the jungles and see wild animals in their native haunts, nearly everyone can go to the zoos, where the beasts, confined in small cages, pace back and forth in view of the spectators. But visitors to the zoo see only a part of the picture. True, they can watch the monkeys perform antics on the perches and runways, or the lions and tigers rage from wall to wall in their barred dens, while the giant elephants suck peanuts from the floor and swing their pendulum-like trunks in search of more food.

But behind the scenes there is an even more interesting story about the care and effort that are required to show the animals, the task of collecting wild beasts, and of housing them when they are unaccustomed to new and strange conditions. It is this story that Raymond L. Ditmars and William Bridges tell in "Wild Animal World" (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. \$3). Both of the authors are connected with the New York Zoological Park, and there they have had ample opportunities to study animals and to know of

the difficulties which constantly beset the zoo-keeper. He must feed the animals, keep their quarters clean, watch their health, doctor their injuries, and perform innumerable other duties in the course of their care.

The book is tremendously interesting, because it is so full of actual episodes which the authors have witnessed in their work. The reading of it will add to anyone's visit to zoos, whether they be in New York, Washington, Kansas City, or Los Angeles. The book is well illustrated with pictures of animals in captivity.

* * *

SO MANY of the novels about high school students and graduates utterly fail to interest the reader. Many of them are childish, or they are written as if the author had drawn his characters from imagination, rather than from having come into contact with the people he pretended to know something about. But occasionally there is a refreshing exception to this type of book. Such an exception is Adele De Leeuw's "A Place for Herself" (New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2).

This novel is the story of Gail Sherwood, who resides in Craleigh, a small town in Ohio. She lives with a maiden aunt who, although meaning to be kind to her niece, suddenly decides that Gail cannot go to college after she has graduated from high school. This looms as an insurmountable disappointment to the



IT'S A HOLDUP
ELDERMAN IN WASHINGTON POST

girl, because many of her friends are making their plans after commencement to leave in the fall for universities in various places. And Gail's best friend, Judy Mason, has even a more glamorous future, because she is leaving for Paris to study art.

It is a dismal outlook that faces the girl, because she at first sees little that she can do in such a small town as Craleigh. Her friends will be gone, and she has only the prospect of helping her aunt take care of an old house. But she finds a way out that turns what threatened to be an uninteresting year into many months of happiness and success. The story is remarkable because the author has made the situation real and the outcome within reason.

J. H. A.

The Farm Security Administration

A FEW weeks ago President Roosevelt reorganized the Resettlement Administration as the Farm Security Administration. The change in name means very little, since the FSA will carry on much of the work which the RA started. Will W. Alexander, former head of the RA, is now director of the FSA, with practically the same staff.

The principal problem which faced the RA several years ago was that of caring for the thousands of destitute farm families in the United States. The FSA must meet that same essential problem. In 1930 there were a million farm families living on less than \$400 a year. That meant poor housing, insufficient clothing, lack of food, inadequate medical care, no recreation—all the things which go with poverty. These families were a constant drain on government and charity. For example, three counties in the dust bowl have received seven million dollars in relief since 1930, and, while the people have been kept from starvation, they are not much better off than they were before. The RA had to devise some way to make the hard-up farmers self-supporting, to take them off the relief rolls permanently. Their needs differed; one plan would not help them all, so the RA used several methods, some of which have been more successful than others. The FSA can profit from the experiences of the RA.

Aid to Tenants

One phase of the RA's work was to lend money to tenant farmers and farm laborers to buy farms for themselves. The RA did a little of this, but the FSA will do much more. It will administer the Bankhead-Jones Act, passed just last summer, which deals with farm tenancy specifically. The Act provides 10 million dollars to be used during the next year; administration will cost half a million dollars, and the other nine and one-half million will be lent to farmers. Farm Security officials estimate that they can help only 2,500 to 3,000 with this amount—an infinitesimal approach to



THE SHARECROPPER'S CABIN—CONCERN OF THE FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

the entire problem, as one expert said. But they hope to experiment with the present loans, to learn how to choose the farmers to be helped. Then when Congress makes more and larger appropriations, as it is expected to do, the FSA will know how to use the money to best advantage.

The nine and one-half million dollars has been divided among the states according to the amount of farm tenancy in each state. Most of the money will go to the South, where sharecropping on cotton farms is so common. The loans will be made in 300 counties altogether. In each county, a committee of three local farmers will recommend the families to receive the loans, with the FSA making the final choice from the recommendations. All the money which is lent will eventually come back to the government, although at a low interest rate and over a period of many years.

Another phase of the RA's work is called rural resettlement. Many families—650,000 according to the RA figures—are living on

land which is not worth farming. Some of it has been ruined by erosion from floods, brought about by the cutting of trees and shrubbery. Some of it should never have been farmed, but should have been left as pasture land. Two and one-half million people are living on farms which will never afford them a decent living, and they are too poor to move. The RA bought some of those farms. With the money they received, the families moved to other territories which are more productive. Some of them stayed in the same counties, but on better land. In other cases, the government settled groups of families in new communities. This type of resettlement has not been very satisfactory, and it is doubtful whether the FSA will do any more than maintain the projects already started by the RA. The colony in Alaska was a highly publicized, and highly criticized, example of group resettlement. All resettlement was voluntary, of course; farmers did not have to sell out unless they wished to.

Still another phase of the RA's work is rural rehabilitation, which has been perhaps the most satisfactory of all. Many farmers needed cash to buy livestock, seed, farm implements, and poultry, after the first shock of the depression had taken everything but their land. The RA aided some 500,000 families during its first year by rehabilitation loans, running from two to five years. When the families were so poor that they needed food and clothing, the RA made emergency grants along with the loans. The FSA will continue to make rehabilitation loans; it will also continue the RA's policy of supervising the farmers who receive the loans. There is no use giving destitute farmers a start if they are not going to become efficient and self-supporting, the authorities reason. So the farmers are taught diversified farming, truck gardening, fertilizing, and other methods which will help them earn an adequate yearly income. The RA also brought about many debt adjustments, by which farmers who mortgaged their land during boom years had their debts adjusted to figures more reasonable according to current economic conditions.

Other Activities

An article in *THE AMERICAN OBSERVER* for October 25, 1937, described another of the RA's projects—suburban resettlement. Such projects have been severely criticized because of their cost in proportion to the number of people who will be benefited, and it is not likely that the FSA will start any more.

A phase of the RA's work which will not be taken over by the FSA is that of land use. The RA, after purchasing the farms which were not worth farming, sowed grass, planted trees, built small dams to stop floods and erosion, and turned them into parks and game preserves. All this work has been turned over to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, which will carry on a much more extensive program of land use than the RA attempted.

Historical Backgrounds

By David S. Muzzey and Paul D. Miller

The Progress of American Education

educate their neighbors' children. They themselves would have derived no benefits from such schools, for they would never have permitted their own children to attend the schools attended by the common run of children.

But the movement for a general system of education could not be held back. Massachusetts led the way. In 1837, it established a state board of education. Largely through the efforts of its secretary, Horace Mann, whose centenary is being observed this year, the foundations for a tax-supported system of education were laid. He may be considered the father of the free

public school system, for after the Massachusetts example, many other states followed.

At first, free education was confined to the elementary grades. It was not until the post-Civil War period that the movement for free secondary education made much headway. Naturally, there has been no uniform development throughout the nation, for education still remains primarily a local concern. The states have laid down certain rules, but it is generally the local authorities who have complete jurisdiction. Thus, we find that in certain sections and localities, education had made remark-

able progress, while in others it is still in a backward state, consisting primarily of instruction in the three R's.

The greatest progress seems to have come since the turn of the century. In 1900, for example, there were only 630,048 students enrolled in secondary schools; by 1935, the number had jumped to over six million. During the first three decades of the century, the number of persons attending colleges, universities, and teacher-training schools increased 314 per cent. At present, about a fourth of the entire population is directly engaged in educational activities of one kind or another, either as teachers or students.

Future Needs

Despite this phenomenal progress, present-day reality still falls short of the dreams of the far-sighted statesmen of the early days. Today educational facilities—in terms of teachers and buildings and equipment—fall way short of the needs. Far too many young people do not carry their education beyond the elementary grades. Only slightly more than a fourth of the pupils now in the fifth grade will continue through high school; and only a fifth of these who graduate from high school will go through college.

Not only is there a deficiency in the quantity of education, but also in the quality. Not always is there adequate return for the time and money spent on education. As is pointed out elsewhere in this issue of *THE AMERICAN OBSERVER*, education in the United States is undergoing a period of flux and transformation. Experiments are being conducted in many school systems with a view to making education more responsive to the true needs the young people of the nation. Courses of study are being altered; new techniques are being constantly introduced. In the main, however, the educational system of today is a far cry from the rudimentary methods which were prevalent a hundred years ago.

FROM the very early days of our national existence, problems of education have loomed large in public discussion. Many of the Founding Fathers and early statesmen had given serious thought to the function of education in a democracy. They tried to work out a system which would make education really effective in the new nation. It is a rather significant fact that such men as Washington and Jefferson held ideas which were truly advanced. They anticipated, by at least a hundred years, the projects of education which were eventually launched. Most of them felt that education must serve as a great bulwark for the democratic institutions which had been established and insisted that there should be a nationwide system of popular education, supported by general taxation, and running from the elementary grades to the university.

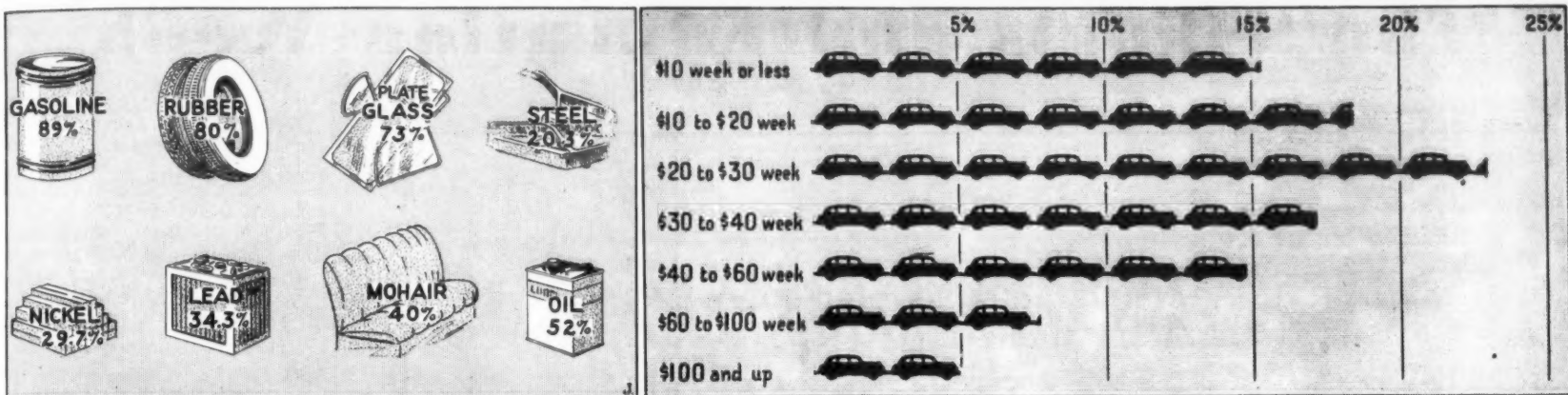
Early Visions

However far-sighted these early visions may have been, they were not easily realized. From the days of the Revolution until the thirties of the last century, education was almost exclusively in the hands of private initiative and benevolence. Most of the schools charged fees, with the result that large numbers of children had no opportunities for education. In New York City, for example, it is estimated that about 1820, half the children went uneducated because their parents were too poor to pay the fees charged by educational institutions. Elementary education, in which the United States now excels, was perhaps the most neglected branch, for there were relatively few schools. In the college grade, considerable progress had been made in both the North and the South.

Thus, during the early period of our history, education was regarded as a luxury. The idea of a tax-supported system of general education was abhorrent to most of the moneyed people. They saw no reason why they should be compelled to pay taxes to



AMERICA'S FIRST HIGH SCHOOL—THE BOSTON LATIN SCHOOL, 300 YEARS AGO



THE AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY IS THE LARGEST USER OF EIGHT COMMODITIES

MORE THAN HALF OF THE AUTO-OWNING FAMILIES IN THE UNITED STATES EARN LESS THAN \$30 WEEKLY

The Automobile and American Life

HUNDREDS of thousands of Americans have crowded into display rooms in the last few weeks to get their first glimpse of the 1938 automobiles. The cities have their automobile shows, bringing together all the models so that prospective buyers may compare them side by side. In nearly every town and village in the nation, dealers' showrooms are the center of interest. Farmers are driving into town to see the new cars, to discuss their relative merits with bankers, barbers, doctors, teachers, and laborers. The advent of the new models is an important event in the United States, because five million or more of them are expected to be sold during the next 12 months, the product of our largest manufacturing industry. And together with the used car sales the total automobile transactions will exceed 11 million.

Rapid Growth

The growth of that industry has been rapid. In 1895 there were only four motor vehicles registered; by 1900 there were approximately 4,000; 10 years later, 190,000. Today America has 28 million automobiles, twice as many as there are in the rest of the world. The early cars could hardly be recognized as the ancestors of our modern automobiles. As the New



THE MODERN CAR
(Courtesy Edward G. Budd Manufacturing Company.)

York Times says: "The automobile of that day looked like a shaftless buggy with wheels borrowed from the bicycle; it was 'steered with a broomstick,' or with a spade handle, and it clanged a gong—as if its one-cylinder exhaust couldn't be heard blocks away."

Few people foresaw the tremendous effects, social and economic, which the automobile would have on the nation. Most people could not see the chugging "horseless carriage" as the forerunner of an industry which would one day employ six million people, directly and indirectly. Last year the automobile was responsible for one job in every seven. There were truck drivers, salesmen, filling station employees, taxi and bus drivers, mechanics, and men employed in the factories themselves. Then there were thousands of laborers in steel mills, lead, zinc, coal, and iron mines, on cotton farms, in glass factories and lumbering camps, who owed their jobs to automobiles. Into the manufacture of automobiles goes 80 per cent of all the rubber used in the nation, 73 per cent of the plate glass, 30 per cent of the nickel, 34 per cent of the lead, 40 per cent of the mohair, and 20 per cent of the steel. Half of all the lubricating oil and 90 per cent of all the gasoline are used by automobiles.

Even the railroads, usually thought of as the natural rival of the automobile, can

thank it for one-seventh of all the freight which was shipped last year. There are 335,000 engineers and construction workers who make their living by building and repairing the nation's roads. Of course, the automobile put many men out of work—carriage builders, blacksmiths, harness men—but the industry employs directly at least two million more than it deposed, without counting those given employment indirectly.

Billions of Dollars

All told, the automobile accounts for nine billion dollars of the nation's income, or one-seventh of the grand total. The value of finished cars, accessories, and parts is more than that of any other manufacturing industry. Next to grocery stores, there are more garages and filling stations than any other form of retail establishment, and they do a total business of six and one-half billion dollars a year.

The manufacture of automobiles has greatly changed from the days when the Olds Motor Works astounded the industrial world by turning out 400 cars in one year. Now they roll away from the factories by the thousands. Many makes of automobiles have come and gone; there have been at least 1,500 different kinds, and approximately 30 of them have survived. At first, steam and electric carriages were very popular. In 1900 there were some 200 different companies making steam and electric automobiles, but the leading manufacturers soon turned to gasoline. Today there are three companies which produce most of the cars sold: General Motors, Chrysler, and Ford.

Businessmen are watching the automobile industry carefully at present. The recent slump in the stock market has given rise to the fear that perhaps the country is approaching another depression. If the sale of new cars meets expectations, it will mean that at least one-seventh of the nation's industrial machinery is running at regular speed—a good indication that no serious decline is likely. The automobile industry led the way out of the last depression. It has increased its activities steadily since 1933, when not quite two million cars were sold. Although the 1929 peak of six million has not been reached, the 1937 total is expected to approach it. Many of the sales made in the last few years have been to people who kept their old cars through the worst years of the depression. That slack has been taken up considerably, although the average car on the road today is slightly older than it was in 1929. If business holds up, 1938 should be a banner year for automobile dealers.

Federal and state governments collected one and one-half billion dollars from motorists last year; one tax dollar of every seven came through the automobile industry. The tax on gasoline is the most productive. Both the federal and state governments levy a gasoline tax, which averages five cents a gallon, although drivers in some states must pay as high as nine cents. There are other taxes, on oil, tires and tubes, accessories and parts, besides the state registration fees. It is estimated that the service station operator turns over

to the government about one dollar of every \$3.50 he takes in. Most of the money goes into building and maintaining highways, so the motorists really receive the benefits. Within the last few years, however, some states have been diverting funds taken in from automobile taxes to other uses, and organizations such as the American Automobile Association have protested sharply. Money taken from motorists should be used to help them, says the AAA. It is estimated that as much as 16 per cent of the tax money has been diverted—enough to have built thousands of miles of highways. For the most part, the taxes have been well spent. The million miles of surfaced roads in the United States attest to that, although engineers say that the highway building program is just getting started.

Automobiles, once a luxury, are now considered almost a necessity. More than half of our 28 million cars are owned by persons whose income is less than \$30 a week. The first cars were strictly rich men's playthings, costing from \$1,000 to \$4,000. American manufacturers realized early that if they were to have a wide market, they would have to put their product within reach of the masses of families with low incomes. Henry Ford's Model T, first built in 1907, was the answer to the demand for low-priced cars, and other manufacturers soon followed suit.

Effect on National Life

The effect which the automobile has had on the nation's life is easily seen. It has made it possible for the American people to know their country and one another. Farmers in isolated regions no longer are restricted to the weekly or monthly trip to town for their association with the rest of the world. Small towns have declined as trade centers, since women who go shopping today may drive a hundred miles to buy a new dress or coat. The automobile has helped to relieve the congestion in the cities, however. Office and factory workers think nothing of driving eight or 10 miles every day from a home in the suburbs to their work. Cities have spread because of cheap, convenient transportation. The country schoolhouse is slowly losing out; three million country children ride buses to and from consolidated schools every day. Doctors, ambulances, fire wagons, and police cars can reach almost any spot now in minutes rather than hours. America has become a nation of tourists because of the automobile; 37 million people traveled



FORERUNNER OF THE FLIVVER
(From an advertisement in Harper's Magazine for March, 1905.)

thousands of miles last year on pleasure trips. The average American today travels 4,000 miles a year; in 1900 he traveled only 65 miles.

The automobile has brought its problems, such as street and highway safety. Last year there were more than 37,000 persons killed in motor accidents, and many more thousands were seriously injured. This is not good for the automobile industry, so manufacturers are at work constantly to make their products safer, although only 10 per cent of all accidents are attributed to mechanical defects now. Cars are being built now which will go as fast as most people care to drive them; they are as comfortable as science can make them. The next step in construction is to reduce the danger of accidents. Automobiles will never be foolproof, but they are acquiring more safeguards every year.

All this has taken place since 1892, when S. H. Roper of Roxbury, Massachusetts, sold the first steam carriage to the village doctor. It would be difficult to find any other one factor which has so changed the nation's life in such a short time.

Your Vocabulary

Do you know the meaning of the italicized words in the following sentences? The man made a *ludicrous* appearance. The climate *enervated* the people. He had *altruistic* motives. The boy was known for his *veracity*. He *procrastinates* in every emergency. There was a *blemish* in the painting. It was agreed to *mediate* the dispute. He had a *latent* ability for playing tennis.

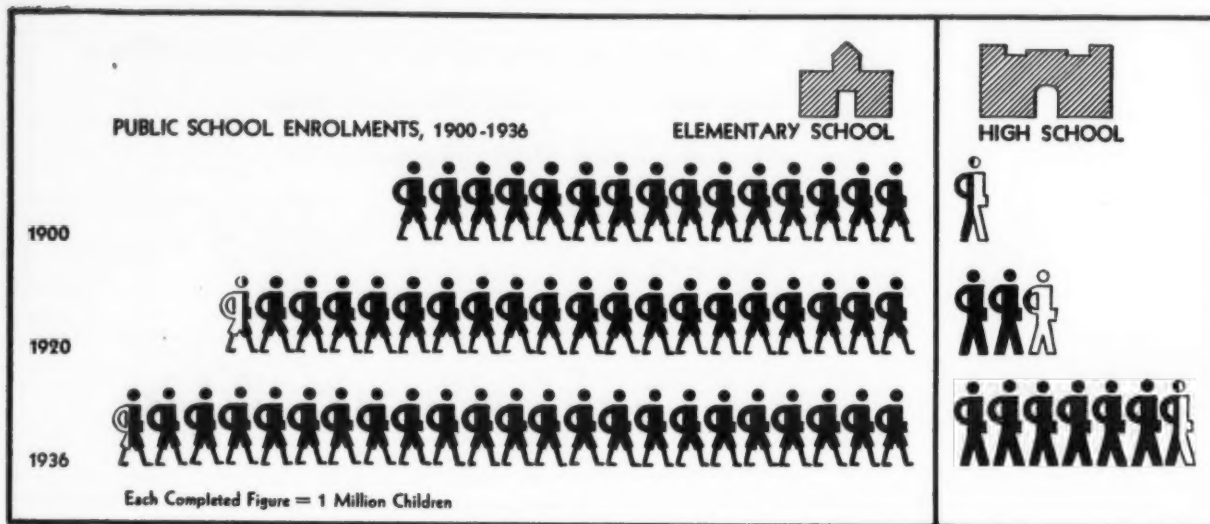
PRONUNCIATIONS: François de la Rocque (frahn-swah' duh' la' rok'-o as in or), André Tardieu (ahn-dray' tar-dyuh'), Balearic (bal-e-ar'ik), Majorca (mah-jor'ka), Primo de Rivera (pree'mo day' ree-vay'ra), Ibiza (ee-bee'tha), Formentera (for-men-tay'ra), Jorge Ubico (hor'hay oo-bee'ko).

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

1. What are some of the leading problems confronting American education today?
2. If you were called upon to draft a new course of studies for your high school, what subjects would you include?
3. What functions did such early statesmen as Washington and Jefferson think education in this country should perform and what system did they advocate?
4. Do you think America's foreign policy from the time of the Armistice to the present has been wise and constructive? Why?
5. Which of the courses outlined in the article appearing on page 1 of this issue of THE AMERICAN OBSERVER would you advocate as most constructive?
6. Why are the Balearic Islands important to France? Italy? England?
7. What role does the automobile industry play in the economic progress of the United States?
8. What is meant by the "glittering generality" method of spreading propaganda? Do you think there can be good propaganda as well as bad?
9. What are the principal functions of the newly organized Farm Security Administration?

The Schools and Education Week

(Concluded from page 1, column 1)



ADAPTED FROM A CHART PREPARED BY THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

the people can bear. Under the circumstances, should the attempt be made to reach the 30 per cent of the young people who are not now in the secondary schools? This could probably be done, especially if the system of raising money for the support of schools should be revised in some of the communities where it is very hard to collect. Much could be done by changing the plans for raising taxes so that the burden would fall on the shoulders of those best able to bear it. If this were done everywhere, the people would, no doubt, be able to raise enough money so as to give a high school education to all who were able to receive it. But many will oppose such an increase in expenditure.

A Vital Problem

Another problem relating to the schools which is being debated by educators throughout the nation is this: Should a young person be kept in high school at the public expense if he does not do the work which the school requires? Should he be kept if he does not try to profit from attendance? There are a considerable number who do not make such an attempt. Is it a duty of the public to pay out money to keep them in school when they make no effort to improve themselves? And what about the boy or girl who, while making an effort, is not able mentally to do the work which the school expects of him? Everyone agrees that every effort should be made by teachers to help such students. They should be given some kind of work which will be helpful to them and which they can do, but if nothing can be found at which they can succeed while at school, should they be dropped? Are good students and well-intentioned students held back by the presence in the school of those who cannot or will not do the work? These are questions which are being considered very widely by school administrators.

Not only are increasing numbers of boys and girls in America going to high school, but the nature of the work which they are called upon to do in high school is undergoing great changes. The high schools of today are far different from those of 20 or 30 years ago—at least most of them are—and further developments are under way. In the old days a relatively small number of the boys and girls went to high school, and those who did go were likely to be interested in higher learning. Most of them were planning to go to college, and so the high schools were looked upon as institutions which would prepare their students for college. The students were required to take subjects similar to those which were given in college in order that they might be ready to go on with their work without a break when the college years began. Hence, all those who came to high school were expected to take Latin, mathematics, foreign languages, history, and certain other subjects which would be continued in college.

Now a great change has come about. In many communities nearly all the young people who finish the elementary school go on to high school, whether they are much interested in books and reading or not. A large proportion of them do not intend to go to college. Hence, those who have charge of making out the programs of the high schools are coming to feel that they must do far more than to train the students to succeed at the subjects they will take in college. Many of the students will not go beyond the high school, so it becomes necessary to give them the kind of training which will help them best to take care of their health, to get along in society, to make a living, to be good citizens, to enlarge their interests, and to live satisfying lives, whether they are going to college or not.

A great many of these purposes can be realized in part if students continue to take the subjects which have always been given heretofore in the high schools. But many educators believe that these subjects should not be given as much emphasis as they have been given. It is being argued that many new courses should be introduced into the schools—courses which meet the actual needs of young people more directly than do the courses in mathematics and Latin and modern languages and history. Few educators would give up these courses altogether, but very many would call upon the students to give a smaller proportion of their time to these subjects and a larger proportion to courses which help them directly to meet problems as individuals and as citizens, to courses which help them to choose occupations and which in other ways bear more directly upon their needs and interests. How far the schools should go in that direction is one of the outstanding educational problems of the day.

Emphasis on Guidance

The other developments in the high schools are at present commanding widespread attention. One of these is the development of programs of guidance, and the other is an increasing emphasis upon the social studies.

Guidance is a relatively new thing in the schools. The old plan was to have all the students take certain prescribed courses, with the hope that they would benefit from the courses, but without any very definite attempt to see just what they were getting. Now great attention is given to individual students. An attempt is being made in many schools to study the interests of each student, to find out what each one can do best, to advise him about the courses that he should take in school, about the interests he should develop, the activities in which he should engage, and the life work he should pursue after leaving school. It is a very common custom now for high schools, especially the larger ones, to have members of the faculty who do no teaching at all,

but who give full time to this work of guidance—to advising or guiding the boys and girls through school and out into the vocational life.

Of course, no one believes that a school, by adopting a guidance program, can relieve the individual student of the responsibility of looking out for himself. No student can throw the whole burden of determining what interests he shall pursue and what activities he shall engage in upon advisers. The most progressive schools, however, assume that they may be very helpful to the students in giving counsel. Hence the guidance movement is perhaps the outstanding one in American secondary education at this time.

Citizenship Training

There is a general feeling among educators that the training for citizenship which American students have been receiving is not all that it might be—that the students have not been sufficiently trained to do their part in a democracy. Many courses in history have been given, and that is regarded as a very commendable thing. History has great value and should be taught in the schools. It is desirable that those who live in any country, whether it is a democracy or an autocracy, should know a great deal of the national history. There have also been courses in civics and the nature of the government has been described. That, too, is a necessary and desirable thing, but training for citizenship in a democracy, so many educators are saying, calls for training in addition to these things. In a democracy citizens

must make decisions. They must deal with concrete problems before the public. Hence in a democracy young citizens should be trained to study definite and concrete public problems. They should gain practice in the development of opinions. They should learn a great deal about public opinion and how it works. They should find out how they themselves may influence public opinion and help to control it. Hence there is a very definite movement in the American high schools today toward giving greater emphasis to a kind of citizenship training which especially prepares students for political life in a democratic nation.

Social Responsibility

Closely related to the changes which are going on in the courses which train for citizenship is the development of a new concept of high school education and its purpose. In earlier days it was felt that young people received a high school education in order that they might individually be more successful. That is still one of the objects of maintaining the schools. One purpose certainly is that those who attend them should be better trained as individuals and that they might better achieve their individual purposes. At the same time, however, there is a growing conviction that the public schools must be maintained primarily in order that communities may be better, that the social life may be improved, that the nation may be stronger, that there may be more opportunities for larger numbers of people. In other words, there is a growing belief that an individual is educated, not only that he may personally succeed, but that he may help to improve his nation, his state, and his community. It is being seen more clearly than it used to be that no one lives to himself alone, but that we are all in the same boat and that we will get along well only if we cooperate effectively in our work together. The schools are, therefore, undertaking as never before to emphasize character as well as intellectual growth, to stimulate a spirit of unselfishness, to develop a social conscience and a sense of patriotism which will lead each to feel that he should be a servant of all.

This ideal of making the school an agency for the development of a cooperative spirit and a broad sense of patriotism is not reached with equal success in all schools. It is, however, being proclaimed increasingly by educators as the goal toward which all should strive. Furthermore, this ideal is influencing the actual work of the schools to an increasing degree.



Smiles



There is a fellow we know whose wife hasn't permitted him to spend a cent of his wages in thirty years. Yet he lies awake nights worrying about Roosevelt establishing a dictatorship.

—Troy (N. Y.) RECORD

A horseman went into a saddler's shop and asked for one spur.

"But why only one spur?" asked the puzzled clerk.

"Well, if I can get one side of the horse to go, the other'll go with it." —N. Y. Post

Student: "Teacher, will you help me with this problem?"

Teacher: "I would, only I don't think it would be right."

—BOYS' LIFE

Johnny, 10 years old, applied for a job as grocery boy for the summer. The grocer wanted a serious-minded youth, so he put Johnny to a little test. "Well, my boy, what would you do with a million dollars?" he asked.

"Oh glory, I don't know—I wasn't expecting so much at the start."

—SELECTED

"Thursday I lost a gold watch which I valued very highly. Immediately I inserted an ad in your lost-and-found column and waited. Yesterday I went home and found the watch in the pocket of another suit. Bless your paper."

—Milwaukee JOURNAL

Having overslept himself on his wedding morn, the bridegroom hastened to the station only to find that his train had gone.

Half-frantic, he rushed into the post office and sent off the following telegram:

"Delayed. Don't marry till I come."

—SELECTED



"I'LL BE DOWN AT ABOUT FIVE-THIRTY!"

BOYS' LIFE